

**TESTIMONY OF ROBERT M. WARD
NOMINEE FOR AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**

January 20, 2011

Good Afternoon Senator Looney, Representative Janowski, Senator Fasano, Representative Piscopo and members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee.

It is my pleasure to be before you this afternoon to ask your support for my nomination to serve as an Auditor of Public Accounts for the State of Connecticut.

First I would like to publicly thank Senator McKinney and Representative Cafero for the support they have shown in me by nominating me for this important position.

The Auditors of Public Accounts hold a special position of trust within State Government. I will do my best to uphold the traditions of my immediate predecessor Bob Jaekle by working hard and exercising sound judgment. I will work diligently to uphold the traditions of both Auditor Jaekle and Auditor Kevin Johnston to work in a bi-partisan manner to act as a watchdog and to call them as I see them. I am confident that in working with my fellow nominee and former legislative colleague John Geragosian we can uphold that tradition. I very much look forward to working together with John as we jointly manage the work of the Office of Auditor of Public Accounts.

I believe I have the background and skills to effectively carry out the duties of State Auditor. My experience as an attorney in private practice has provided me with analytical skills that are important to the work as an auditor. Audits require an analysis of whether an agency is operating in compliance with all laws. It is certainly not necessary to be an attorney to make such decisions but my training and experience will be beneficial. My work as a legislator and as a legislative leader provides me with a detailed understanding of State Government that is critical to effective leadership of the Office of the Auditors of Public Accounts. Finally, my service as the head of an Executive Branch Agency has broadened my understanding of the administrative and management side of Connecticut State Government. In summary, my 26 years of experience in public service has provided me

with a broad understanding of how the State of Connecticut's government works.

The official duties of the State Auditor are defined in the statutes. Those duties include auditing Executive Branch Agencies, providing federally mandated audits of State agencies administering federally funded programs and handling "whistleblower" complaints.

In order to carry out those responsibilities, a solid understanding of State Government is necessary and I believe I possess that understanding.

The office is in very good shape thanks to the leadership of Auditors Jaekle and Johnston and a highly professional and dedicated staff. If approved, I commit to not only uphold the solid traditions of our predecessors but to seek to advance the office. Although I do not have a detailed agenda of changes I do have some specific thoughts on the matter. I believe that through increased use of technology we can make the agency more efficient. As all of State Government moves forward with increased e-government initiatives and generally seek to improve information technology it is critical that the Auditors keep pace. In addition, I am hopeful that we will be able to identify the resources to reinstate the performance audit function of the office. Performance audits can help the Legislature and the Executive Branch to deliver state services at lower cost to the people of Connecticut. In these difficult fiscal times performance audits are of particular importance. I also look forward to working with the legislature to address concerns raised by the Program Review and Investigations Committee and by Auditors Jaekle and Johnston regarding whistle blower complaints. I am pleased to report that John and I share the same goals for the office.

On a personal note it will be nice to be back in the Legislative Branch of Government. The last two weeks as an interim auditor seems a bit like coming home. Again, I would like to thank Senator McKinney and Representative Cafero for nominating me for this position and hope that the Committee will provide me with this new opportunity for public service.

I would be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have. Thank you.